

ARTICLE APPEARED
ON PAGE A-1

NEW YORK TIMES
26 MARCH 1983

F.B.I. Rules Out Russian Control Of Freeze Drive

By LESLIE MAITLAND

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, March 25 — The Federal Bureau of Investigation has determined that the Soviet Union does not "directly control or manipulate" the American nuclear freeze movement, according to a declassified version of the report released today.

"Based on information available to us, we do not believe the Soviets have achieved a dominant role in the U.S. peace and nuclear freeze movements, or that they directly control or manipulate the movement," the report concludes.

President Reagan said last November that "foreign agents" had helped instigate the freeze movement in the United States. He said "plenty of evidence" existed that foreign agents were sent to "help instigate and help create" demonstrations in favor of a nuclear weapons freeze, such as the rally in New York City last June 12, which attracted nearly a million marchers by an F.B.I. estimate. His remarks drew criticism from organizers of the rally, from the American Civil Liberties Union and from several members of Congress.

Lyndon K. Allin, deputy press secretary for the White House, said the report released today "bears out the numerous ways the Soviets have tried to exploit and have influence on the peace movement in Democratic countries, including the United States." He added that he believed the report was consistent with the President's remarks last fall.

The report does say, "It is extremely difficult to determine the extent to which various peace organizations and coalitions are being influenced or manipulated by the Soviet Union."

It adds that "Soviet-controlled organizations participated at the highest levels of the June 12 Committee and exerted pressure" on it to focus on American, rather than on Soviet, weapons policies.

The Soviet Union, the F.B.I. report says, is attempting to "play on the sentiments of the Western peace movements" and to "create the impression that the Soviet Union is more interested than the United States in serious arms control and disarmament negotiations." It says that the Russians have attempted to "capitalize" on the peace movement and its objectives "that parallel or tend to promote Soviet foreign policy and propaganda."

Efforts to reach members of the June 12 Committee today were unsuccessful. But last November, Leslie Cagan, one of the coordinators of the disarmament rally, said, "The assertion that the American people are being manipulated by 'foreign agents' only serves to divert our energies away from the real issues: the clear and present dangers presented by our nuclear arsenals."

'Legitimate Concerns' Cited

The study, made public by Representative C. W. (Bill) Young, Republican of Florida, says the bureau does not believe that the Soviet Union was responsible for the large turnout at that rally.

"The overwhelming majority of the nearly one million people that attended the June 12 rally were members of independent peace and civic organizations, and they attended the rally as an expression of legitimate concerns about nuclear weapons," the study says.

The report, dated March 1983 and entitled "Soviet Active Measures Relating to the U.S. Peace Movement," had been requested by the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, according to a spokesman for the bureau.

Mr. Young said he had asked the bureau to declassify parts of the report "so we can share with the American people the extensive Soviet propaganda effort being undertaken within our own borders." He said, however, that the actual report was much longer than the 27-page declassified version and that "most of the very convincing material unfortunately is still classified." Mr. Young said he had asked the bureau to declassify more of it.

William H. Webster, Director of the F.B.I., testifying today before a Senate committee on the bureau's new guidelines for investigations involving terrorism and domestic security, said the bureau was not investigating the peace movement. But under different guidelines for foreign counterintelligence investigations, Mr. Webster said, the bureau is examining "individuals who try to influence" the movement.

While assessing the Soviet Union's role as less dominant than President Reagan had suggested, the bureau's report does say that within the last two years the Soviet Union had increased its efforts to "exploit" the peace movement and had sought to infiltrate it.